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MOST REMARKABLE INCIDENT IN BASEBALL



Fred Merkle sizes up as one of the most remarkable men in baseball.

Seven years or so ago he pulls a "boner." It was a slip of mental cable that would have been excused 99 times out of 100. But that was the hundredth time. Merkle's misplay cost the New York Giants the championship of the National league and deprived them of a split of the world series gold.

And from that day to this he has been the target for sarcasm. For two or three years after that incident his every appearance on the ball field was greeted with hoots. He was jeered at, scoffed at and spoofed wherever he went. He was ridiculed and his name became a synonym for "bonehead."

The treatment accorded Merkle would have broken the spirit of any other man. It would have affected his work to such an extent that not only would he have skidded out of the majors, but would have landed eventually in the baseball scrap heap. It was the sort of treatment that only a man with iron will—a man filled with the do-or-die spirit—could have submitted to—and lived through. And Merkle is that man.

Despite Jeers Becomes Star.

For seven years he has remained in the same uniform that he "discredited." For seven years he has played a brand of baseball that marks him as one of the most valuable cogs in the Giant machine; one of the best first basemen in the land. He has played always to hostile crowds; always before people who were "gunning" for him. He knew that every second he was being watched; that the slightest slip would bring renewed hoots and hisses and jeers.

It has been seven years and a bit longer since Merkle pulled his "boner"—and Merkle today is playing a better brand of all-around baseball than he did earlier in his career; playing it in face of open opposition not only abroad but among the home town fans. "Fred Merkle is the most courageous man that ever donned a baseball uniform," was the compliment John McGraw paid to him some time ago. "He stands out today as an heroic figure of bravery and gameness in face of terrific obstacles."

How "Boner" Was Pulled.

The Merkle "boner" is fresh in the minds of the fans of eight and ten years ago, but a new generation has arisen since then. For its benefit the story of the "boner" is here retold.

The misplay was made on the Polo grounds, September 23, 1908, in the presence of a 23,000 crowd. When the Giants went to bat in the last half of the ninth the score stood 1 to 1. By the time two men were out McCormick was on third, Merkle on first and Bridwell at the plate.

Bridwell shot a single over second base and McCormick raced home with what seemed to be the winning run. But it wasn't. Merkle, instead of running to second base and touching it, suffered a mental lapse in his elation over what seemed to be a Giant victory which would have clinched the pennant.

Merkle never touched second base, but detoured on his way and raced into the clubhouse. Johnny Evers, playing second for the Cubs that day, noticed

Merkle's "boner" and knew that if he could get back the ball and touch second base before Merkle he would force out Merkle, making the third out and nullifying McCormick's "winning" run.

McGinnity's Plan Foiled.

Evers yelled to Hoffman, who grabbed the ball and threw toward second. However, the crowd already had jumped upon the field and the ball, instead of going direct to Evers, hit one of the spectators and was deflected. By this time Joe McGinnity, the Giant pitcher, sensed that something was wrong. He rushed onto the crowded diamond and grabbed the ball. Then he started racing with it toward the clubhouse in the hope of reaching Merkle and "tipping" him to hurry back to the diamond and touch the second sack.

But Frank Chance, the Cub manager, joined in the affair by overtaking McGinnity, whose progress was impeded by the crowd. Chance jumped upon Joe's shoulders and threw him to the ground. Other Cub players rushed to Chance's aid and tried to take the ball from McGinnity's hand. Joe, seeing that he was overpowered, threw the pellet as far as he could into the crowd.

Kroh and Howard, two Cub recruits, dove among the feet of the spectators and jointly grabbed the ball, which was being kicked around. Howard threw the ball to Tinker, who tossed it to Johnny and the "Trojan," stepping on second base and waving the ball high in the air, called upon the umpires to declare Merkle out.

Giants Lose Playoff.

In the meantime Chance plowed through the now amazed crowd, grabbed Umpire "Hank" O'Day and demanded that he decide that McCormick's run did not count, owing to the fact that Merkle had been forced out. O'Day refused to give any decision until he was escorted to the clubhouse by a squad of police.

O'Day, immediately upon his arrival there, declared Merkle was forced out and called the game a tie. Harry Pulliam, then president of the National league, sustained Hank's ruling and ordered the game played over.

The day set for the playoff was the last of the season—October 8. It found the Giants and Cubs tied for first place honors, with 98 games won and 55 lost, giving each a percentage of .640. The Giants lost that battle 4 to 2, and the game gave the pennant to the Chicago Cubs—a gift by Fred Merkle.

Stars From Illinois University.

Jack Bradley, catcher of the University of Illinois team, who has been signed by Cleveland, is said to be the best player developed at the Illinois school since the days of Jake Stahl. Pitcher W. W. Gunkel is another Illinois collegian signed by Cleveland. The pair made up the Illinois crack battery this year.

Long, Scoreless Game.

As far as the records show, the 16-inning scoreless game between Reds and Braves on June 13 is the longest game ever played in the National without a score being made. The American league record is 13 innings, made by Washington and Detroit in 1900.

QUEER CIRCUIT CLOUT

Most Remarkable Home-Run Drive by Cutshaw.

Brooklyn Player Makes Accidental Hit That Eventually Terminated in Zig-Zag Course Over Right Field Fence.

George Cutshaw of the Dodgers exuded a circuit clout against the Phillies a week or so ago, which will romp down through the vales of history as the most remarkable since the game was born.

The score was tied in the eleventh when Cutshaw went to bat, facing Mayer. The Phillie pitcher heaved a slow one at the Dodger second sacker. Cutshaw started a swing, went half way down and then "tumbled" to the fact that the ball was a floater. He "pulled" his stroke but just as he stopped, he noticed that the ball was curving in, whereupon he made another swipe at it and through some freak caught it on the end of the mace.

Ball Zipped Along.

The ball shot through the air, about ten feet above ground. It sailed just inside the right-field foul line, turning and twisting as it went. To the spectators watching the ball zipping along, it looked like a succession of inshoots. As it neared the fence it started to descend. It struck a board which was nailed to the bottom of the fence, but which jutted out about three feet. As the ball hit that board just where the top of this board and the fence meet, it seemed to hesitate for a fraction of a second. Then, to the utter amusement of the crowd, it climbed the 12-foot wall as though it



George Cutshaw.

had legs. Slowly but surely it moved upward. Finally it reached the top of the fence. Defying the laws of gravity it remained stationary for the barest fraction of a moment and while the 25,000 crowd stood spellbound, the ball rested for a second on the top of the wall and then rolled out into the street.

Strange Antics.

But, in the meantime, Cutshaw was performing antics that almost were as strange as those of the ball. When he rounded first, the Dodger second baseman saw that the ball was headed for the bottom of the fence—a normal two-base hit, if a player hustles. And Cutshaw hustled. He turned first under full head of steam and slid into second in whirlwind fashion. He jumped to his feet a second later and began looking around for orders from the coaches.

Wilbert Robinson, manager of the Dodgers was signaling something in a frantic way. Cutshaw figured that Robinson was ordering him to try for third. Cutshaw started, but when he got no sign from the other coaches, who, by the way, was too busy watching the climbing ball, he figured he had misinterpreted Robinson's signals. So Cutshaw whirled around, ran back toward second and swept into the bag in a cloud of dust.

Then Cutshaw jumped to his feet again and while he brushed his tugs he began looking for orders—and also for the ball.

But did "Robby" mean that Cutshaw should stay at second or go to third? Cutshaw pondered and at last decided to try the advance. Cutshaw raced for it. Halfway along on his journey the third base coach, taking advantage of the temporary lull in the cheering, shouted:

"You hit a homer, George—a homer; slow down."

And then the amazing truth dawned upon Cutshaw and he walked the rest of the way to the home plate, while the huge crowd went into another frenzy of madness at this unexpected eleventh inning victory.

IS REAL PRODIGY IN MATHEMATICS

William Stong Solves Most Intricate Problems Quickly and Without Effort.

ANSWERS APPEAL INSTANTLY

Has Declined Many Offers to Travel and Demonstrate His Gift in Public—Enjoys Amusement He Evokes.

Bloomington, Ill.—Illinois possesses a mathematical prodigy in William Stong, twenty-eight years old of Tazewell county. He has been able to solve any problem in arithmetic that has been given to him. He reels off millions and billions with equal precision and promptness. One of his feats is to wander down to the railway station when a freight train dashes away and add up the numbers on the sides of the cars. By the time the last car has passed he has the total.

People who are skeptical concerning his powers come long distances to test them. They are primed with brain-racking problems, but all prove easy for Stong. One of the most common questions relates to the number of seconds in a lifetime, given the date of birth. One who propounded this problem gave him the date January 26, 1873. Right off the reel came this reply: "15,873 days, 378,392 hours, 22,708,540 minutes, 1,362,211,000 seconds."

Another problem was: "It is 155 miles to Chicago. How many pounds



William Stong.

of rails in the track at 80 pounds to the yard." Without hesitation came the reply: "436,380,000."

Some of His Feats.

Another one was: "An automobile wheel is 30 inches in diameter. How many revolutions will this wheel make in traveling the 100 miles to Chicago?" Stong came back with this answer: "104,476 revolutions."

A nail problem came next. He was told that 32 nails were to be driven. One cent would be paid for the first, 2 cents for the second and double the sum for each succeeding nail. He was asked how much he would be paid for the thirty-second nail. Almost instantly the answer given: "21,474,000.48."

One skeptic propounded: "With 25,000 miles around the earth and silver dollars at an inch and a quarter in diameter, how many will it take to girdle it?" Stong answered: "1,267,200,000."

"The Illinois river flows at the rate

MAY FORCE CHLOROFORM USE

French Likely to Make Use of Anesthetic Compulsory in Army Surgery.

Paris.—The French Academy of Medicine is considering the advisability of recommending the government to make the use of chloroform compulsory in the army, not only in serious operations but also in all cases where the treatment is painful.

At present French soldiers are obliged to submit to vaccination against smallpox and typhoid fever, but they cannot be compelled to accept chloroform against their will.

A committee has been formed to study the question as well as that of rendering compulsory the injection of serums in all cases where the latter are declared to be necessary by the doctor.

Living Family Tree.

Devils Lake, N. D.—Mervin Alcide Belcourt, who arrived last week at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Belcourt, west of Devils Lake, has the distinc-

"FIGHTING SIXTY-NINTH" GETTING AWAY



A scene at the railroad siding showing the crowd of spectators, among whom were the wives, mothers and sweethearts of the "Fighting Sixty-ninth," the first infantry outfit of the National Guard of New York to leave for the mobilization camp at Camp Whitman, Beekman, N. Y.

of 400 cubic feet an hour. If a reservoir was constructed one mile long, one mile wide and half a mile deep, how long would it take to fill it if the water from the river was diverted?"

Stong hesitated for a few moments and then gave the answer: "183,397,440 hours." One man tested Stong with this railroad problem: "There are 750,000 miles of steam railroads in the world. There are 352 rails to every mile. To every pair of rails there are 18 ties with 4 spikes per tie. There are 5 bolts to every rail and 2 steel plates per tie. How many rails, ties, spikes, etc." Within a few moments Stong told his audience to put down the following answer: "There are 264,000,000 rails, 2,367,000,000 ties, 528,000,000 flanges, 950,504,000,000 spikes, 1,302,000,000 bolts and 4,752,000,000 plates. At 85 pounds to the yard there are 224,400,000,000 pounds of steel in the rails. At 50 tons per carload, there would be 2,244,000 cars or 44,880 trains of 50 cars per train."

Was Despair of Teachers.

He was asked to give the total of all the numbers from one up to 9,600, adding them together. His answer was 46,084,800. The total of the numbers from one up to 78,000 was 3,042,930,000.

Stong was asked how many bricks would be required to lay a pavement from New York to San Francisco, 3,578 miles, the pavement to be 60 feet wide and the brick 8 inches long and 2 inches wide. He figured that it would require just 10,201,377,000 bricks.

Asked to divide 68,719,476,736 by 32,768, he answered instantly: "2,007,165."

Stong says this peculiar talent has been with him since early youth. He was the despair of the teachers and the envy of the other children when he solved problems in a moment that required hours for the others. He says there is no particularly severe mental strain when working out the problems, that the answers stand out in front of him, so promptly is the response of his extraordinary brain to the demands that are put upon it. Stong never grows impatient when

there are undue demands made upon him for answers to their problems. He treats all courteously and enjoys the look of amazement he evokes.

Stong has had many opportunities to travel with a circus and exhibit his extraordinary mental gift, but has declined all offers.

FINANCIER DISOWNED SISTER

Displeased Over Her Marriage, He Gave Her No Share in His Fortune.

Baltimore.—By the will of John Black, aged retired financier, probated recently, \$275,000 is left to a number of Episcopal institutions and the Johns Hopkins university, which also became residuary legatees. The estate is estimated at \$1,000,000. Provision was made for one of the financier's two sisters. She, however, died a few weeks ago.

Mr. Black had another sister, Harriet, whom he disowned about forty years ago because she married a Doctor Adler, a Jew. Mrs. Adler also is dead, but there are two or three sons surviving, one of whom is said to be a rabbi, who are now believed to be in New York or Philadelphia.

The estrangement had been complete between Mr. Black and his sister Harriet, although Elizabeth, the other sister, is said to have forgiven her sister, and had her picture hanging in her bedroom.

Mr. Black never married, and his nearest relatives in Baltimore are said to be second cousins.

Girl's Fine School Record.

Eugene, Ore.—Beatrice Yoran, daughter of ex-Mayor D. A. Yoran, has completed a remarkable school attendance. When the high school closed recently this student had rounded out 12 years without once being reported absent or tardy.

Making Brooms Last.

Brooms dipped for a minute or two in boiling suds once a week will be made tough and pliable so that their period of usefulness will be greatly lengthened.

clon. A horse belonging to Orphal was scared out of the stable when the rooster backed in. Throughout the barnyard the bird has been a general disturber of the peace because of his unusual method of locomotion.

Grass Grows in Tree.

Wetmore, Kan.—In the E. W. Thornburrow yard in Wetmore is a large bunch of blue grass growing in the fork of an elm tree ten feet from the ground. Every fall the residents of Wetmore, who are watching this curiosity, expect the grass to be winterkilled, but every spring it shows up green and strong and matures seed. The grass has been growing in the tree for three years.

"Goes to Wedding" Brings Spouse.

Scranton, Pa.—Miss Margaret Clarke, a telephone operator, whispered to her mother the other night that she was going to a wedding. The next day she returned with "Jack" Scanton, a chauffeur, to town. "Whose wedding was it?" the mother asked. "Ours," said Margaret.